cific garden features with stage designs and other ephemera created for Savoy court spectacles, offering the fascinating suggestion that the garden structures at the Venaria Reale were meant to be experienced in succession like the scenes in a theatrical performance. Harris explores the link between garden design and theater, that is, the theatrical quality of Marcantonio Dal Re’s printed views of eighteenth-century Lombard villas, both in the construction of space within the prints and the actual experience of viewing the prints in the original volumes. Dal Re’s intimate knowledge of conventions for contemporary stage design is well documented here, providing convincing support for this reading of the views. French royal festivities were frequently set in gardens, and references to garden pageantry and receptions abound in all five articles on French gardens.

Beyond new information and readings, the essays contain useful warnings as well, such as Harris’s regarding the use of prints and other visual evidence as “accurate testimony of the appearance of sites at selected moments in time” (178). As her essay clearly demonstrates, Dal Re’s prints “are distorted and incorporate fictitious elements; thus they cannot be relied upon as factual documentary evidence of the estates they depict” (179). The point is relevant to virtually every image of an estate or garden feature, and most of us would do well to consider the author’s conclusion that such views are more about the patron’s self-fashioning and are especially revealing when what is represented is in blatant contrast to what was built on the site. This approach might have been partly useful to Hays, who treats a master printmaker’s prints portraying the garden he designed (Carmontelle at Monceau). While the garden features may have been depicted accurately here, the author makes clear that the artist-designer was also quite consciously trying to defend himself against criticisms of his design in the accompanying text; it would appear likely, then, that the views were meant to present a particularly favorable impression of the garden, which may not always have corresponded to its appearance.

This collection of intelligently constructed and carefully researched essays will be an essential addition to both university and home libraries. Thankfully, the original contributions are matched by the physical qualities of the volume, which is both well produced and richly illustrated.

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Architects

Barbara S. Christen and Steven Flanders, editors

Cass Gilbert, Life and Work: Architect of the Public Domain

New York: W.W. Norton, 2001, xvi + 320 pp., 17 color and 216 b/w illus. $60.00 (cloth), ISBN 0-393-73065-4

Geoffrey Blodgett

Cass Gilbert: The Early Years


In his introduction to Cass Gilbert, Life and Work, Robert Stern writes, “the scholarly investigation of late-nineteenth- and early-twentieth-century American architecture has barely begun. True, some parts of our heritage from that period are well-known—those that connect America with the formal inventions of European modernism—but the larger context of American building and achievement remains comparatively unstudied, unknown, and unappreciated” (15). Cass Gilbert, Life and Work, edited by Barbara Christen and Steven Flanders, and Cass Gilbert: The Early Years, by Geoffrey Blodgett, help to fill the gaps in our knowledge of one of the well-known but understudied architects of this period. They also add signifi-
classically styled building was not festive enough to be at the center of the "main picture," so a masking building was proposed. Gilbert fought for and secured permission to design this new, circular, Baroque-inspired structure, called Festival Hall, but somehow the officials thought that they did not have to pay him for it, and in the end Gilbert had to sue to collect his fees.

The chapters are grouped under five general headings: his early practice, the Minnesota State Capitol, the Woolworth Building, campus planning, and two significant public commissions—the Louisiana Purchase Exposition and the U.S. Supreme Court building. There is a plethora of detail in each, but this reader was left with a desire for more on his formative years—his apprenticeship and formal education—and a clearer picture of the undoubtedly strong and persuasive personality whose skill in obtaining commissions led him from obscurity to fame.

The late Geoffrey Blodgett fulfilled this desire with his important study of Cass Gilbert's early years. Blodgett, the Robert S. Danforth Professor of History Emeritus at Oberlin College, survived a lengthy battle with cancer long enough to see his work in published form. His expertise in both political and architectural history brought another dimension to this study, which tells the story of Gilbert's career and family life, from his boyhood in the Midwest to his departure for New York City in 1900. We learn details of Gilbert's influential attachment to his mother, his courtship of his future wife, Julia Finch, his education at MIT, and the trials of a young man beginning a career in the late nineteenth century. Using Gilbert's correspondence, Blodgett created an intimate portrait of the young man's aspirations. Writing from Paris in 1880, Gilbert mused, "The time will come soon enough when I will work and lack praise, when I will do my best for others [who] will not appreciate my work, when the cares and hard work of business will destroy these dreams of idealism and this association with artists; why may I not now enjoy what is probably the golden period of my life?" (35).

Blodgett also captured the political and social milieu at the turn of the century—the growth in the population of the Twin Cities from 87,000 in 1880 to 298,000 in 1890, the practice of establishing business connections through social contacts, and the need for letters of introduction when the young Cass traveled to Europe.

Chapter two, "Massachusetts Institute of Technology," takes us on Gilbert's 1878 journey to Boston, where he began his education in the recently opened architecture program at MIT. Along the way, we find him sketching H. H. Richardson's Trinity Church in Copley Square and discovering a source that would inspire his early work. Later, his growing interest in more formal design would be confirmed by the power of the classical architecture he saw at the World's Columbian Exposition.

Blodgett's thorough history of
William Robert Ware and his establishment of the curriculum at MIT expands the scope and value of this book. Gilbert remained at MIT for only one year before taking charge of his own education with an extended European tour. After a year, with funds depleted and unable to find employment in London, Gilbert returned to America and took a job with McKim, Mead and White. This chapter is filled with details of the famous firm and its partners, and once again Blodgett built a rich picture that draws us into the period. With nine months of formal education, eight months of travel, and twenty-seven months with McKim, Mead and White, Gilbert returned to St. Paul at age twenty-three to begin his independent professional life. One lasting legacy of his early experience in New York was the establishment of the Architectural League in 1881, which Gilbert claimed was his idea (50).

Blodgett recounted the tribulations of Gilbert’s early career in “Hard Times,” chapter seven, and ended the tale with his most important early project, the Minnesota State Capitol. We learn about the difficulties of obtaining the commission, and the process of designing and detailing the magnificent classical building. The epilogue gives us a glimpse of the next phase of Gilbert’s life, when he moved his practice to New York, but here the story ends. We can only hope that someone else will take up the work and eventually give us an equally detailed account of Gilbert’s later career, including the Woolworth Building and the Supreme Court Building.

These two fine volumes are both worthy additions to Cass Gilbert scholarship. Combined with the earlier, more comprehensive, and better-illustrated monograph by Irish, they provide a richly detailed picture of a too long neglected American architect.

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Jonathan M. Reynolds
Maekawa Kunio and the Emergence of Japanese Modernist Architecture
Berkeley: University of California Press, 2001, xvii + 318 pp., 162 illus., 8 in color. $60.00 (cloth), ISBN 0-520-21495-1

Jonathan Reynolds’s Maekawa Kunio and the Emergence of Japanese Modernist Architecture is a seminal contribution to the surprisingly small body of English-language research on modern architecture in Japan. Although Anglophone observers have long shown interest in this topic—Philip Johnson and Henry-Russell Hitchcock included a work by Yamada Mamoru in their International Style exhibition of 1932—the period between 1850 and 1950 has attracted few serious scholars. Reynolds’s book on Maekawa Kunio is in fact the first scholarly monograph on a modern Japanese architect, although numerous coffee-table books outline the work of such figures as Tange Kenzo, Isozaki Arata, and Ando Tadao.

Born in 1905, Maekawa was not the first Japanese architect to embrace European modernism; that honor belongs to a number of architects born a decade earlier, including Yamada, Ishimoto Kikuji, and Horiguchi Sutemi. Nor is he the most celebrated architect of his era: Tange, eight years his junior and his former employee, attracts more attention both inside and outside Japan. Yet in certain ways, Maekawa cedes neither precedence to his elders nor eminence to his disciple: he was the first Japanese architect to work for Le Corbusier in Paris (1928–30), and through World War II none of his peers was more active in advancing the modernist cause. Maekawa can thus be viewed as a case study in the rapid dissemination and transformation of modernist architecture outside Europe, a topic of continually growing interest within the historiography of modern architecture.

Reynolds’s extensively illustrated monograph begins with a chapter that outlines the development of modern architecture in Japan between 1850 and 1930. This section—and indeed many of the characteristics of the book—reflects the paucity of material available to the English-reading audience. The reader of a monograph on Erich Mendelsohn, for instance, would surely not expect a chapter covering the basic development of modern German architecture—such material is widely available elsewhere.

Yet Reynolds’s concise treatment of this